

ΔΟΞ ΠΟΤ ΣΤΗ.

OR,

# AN ANSWER TO

## Sure Footing,

So far as Mr. *Whitby* is concerned in it.

Wherein the Rule and Guide of Faith, the Interest of Reason, and the Authority of the Church in Matters of Faith, are fully handled and vindicated;

FROM THE

Exceptions of Mr. *SERJEANT*,

AND

Petty Flirts of *FIAT LUX*.

Together with

AN ANSWER to Five Questions propounded by a ROMAN CATHOLICK.

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By *Daniel Whitby*, M. A. Coll. Trin. Oxon. Soc.

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*And let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall, Rom. 11.*

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O X F O R D :

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Imprimatur,

ROBERTUS SAT,

VICE-CANCELLARIUS

OXON.





TO THE  
READER.

Courteous Reader,

**T**He *Animadversions* of Mr. Serjeant  
being confused and immethodical,  
would not admit an Answer in that  
Order in which they lie, wherefore I have  
reduced them to their several heads, and as  
I hope, sufficiently discovered the weakness  
of them in the following Chapters, still being  
careful that I did not *actum agere*, or say  
any thing which might interfere with his two  
great Antagonists; I have since been assaul-  
ted by a second Sampson, willing perhaps  
to shew the world what Execution he could  
do with the Jaw bone of an Ass. He hath  
three passages in his Epistle which seem  
A 2 guilty

To the Reader.

guilty of a little reason, and shew he has  
some lucid Intervals which therefore shall  
receive an Answer.

But as for his continual falsifications of  
my words and arguments, his Wit and Drol-  
lery, his Any mad versions, and his white  
Boys, (that is, the residue of his Epistle)  
I shall leave them to be bound up with As-  
triasdult Tosoffacan,

And rest,

Thy Friend and Servant,

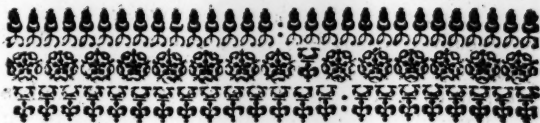
DANIEL WHITBY.

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CHAP.

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## CHAP. I.

*Of the certainty of Faith, and the use  
of Reason in matters of Faith.*

*Prop: 1.* **R** Eason is that faculty which God hath given us to discern betwixt true and false, good or evil, just and unjust: For that we do discern betwixt these things, is every Mans experience, and that we do it by the exercise of Reason, is most evident; for Judgement must be either brutish, or founded upon Reason.

*Coroll:* If then my reason doth determine what is just or unjust, good or evil, true or false, and consequently what is to be done, believed, thought or not, Reason must be my judge in every case. Secondly, To judge, is to determine from some ground, and that is to infer or reason, and therefore nothing can be judge in any case but Reason. Thirdly, The Papist must acknowledge Reason for his Judge in every case; for either Reason must assure them that the Church in her Traditions is infallible, or else they must believe it, they know not why, this done, what is unquestionably the Tradition of the Church, can not be matter of a doubt; and when 'tis doubted or disputed what is the voice of holy Church, Reason

son must still become their Judge, for sure they must have motives to encline them either way? And they are Reasons, wherefore in all cases Reason is their Judge: and were it not the greatest folly to offer Reasons to convince us of the Roman Faith, and at the same time tell us its judgement is not to be taken?

*Object:* But here you presently throw in, p. 187. *The existence of the Trinity*, and then cry out, *To work now with your Reason, and see how you evince it.*

*Ans:* Do you believe the assertion to be true, or not? if true, Why do you then dispute against it? if not, Why do you not return some Answer to those Arguments wherewith it was confirmed? nay, why do you acknowledge, That *in great part of the whole Section, and especially at the beginning, the Discourse is rightly made*, p. 180. since that Discourse is visibly a Complex of Arguments, professedly evincing this conclusion? But Secondly, I conclude the existence of a Trinity by rational Inference from such Scriptures, which affirm, That God is one, and that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are truly God; and therefore do assert it, because my reason judgeth these Inferences to be valid: and the *Socinian*, who rejects the Article, doth not reject the Authority of those Scriptures upon which I ground it, but only endeavors to evade the Inferences of my reason from thence: Thus then you see, that Reason acting on my rule of Faith, produceth this assent. And tell me, Are we not enjoined to give a reason of our Faith, and so of this as well as other Articles, and consequently to acquaint the Enquirer, why we judge it necessary to believe the Existence of a Trinity? You indeed teach me to speak thus, *That I have reason*

to believe Authority, and Authority to believe the Trinity. *Ans<sup>w</sup>*: True, but I must still have reason to conclude it from Authority; for it is not formally contain'd in Scripture, but onely thence inferr'd by reason, so that I have here Divine Authority for my Rule, and Reason for my Guide to apply the Rule unto the Article, and infer it thence.

*Object*: Belief is as properly relative to Authority, as Science is to an act of Reason; whence 'tis as incongruous to say, I must have reason to believe such a Point, as to say, I know such a Point scientifically by Authority. p. 187.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>*: As incongruous as it is, I hope you do believe the existence of a Deity, the Divine Authority of Scriptures, and the truth of Christs Miracles, and that you have reason so to do; and do you not now see the strange and monstrous incongruity of saying, You have reason to believe? Baronius his hand-maid to Divinity will teach you to distinguish betwixt Faith strictly taken for an assent built upon the Testimony of another, in which sense it is relative to Authority; or more generally, and so in Scripture and approved Authors, it denotes any manner of assent: thus we are said to believe our eyes, and Heathens, without a Revelation, to believe a Deity. And lastly, this or that to be the sense of Scripture.

*Prop: 2.* It is confess'd on both sides, and in it self most certain, That the foundation of all our Faith depends on Reason, and is ultimately resolved into it, the Protestant hath his internal and external Arguments to induce him to believe the Divine Authority of Scripture; the Papist, for his upstart Tradition, pretends no less then a Demonstration; and for his

*Exerc. 3.  
Art. 3.  
Sect. 6.*

Churches Authority, he hath his *motives of credibility* to produce. And certain it is that, all our Faith and Religion depends upon the Being of a God, and that assurance which we have, *That his veracity is such, as will not suffer him to deceive us; His goodness such, as will not suffer us to be invincibly deceived, to our souls destruction; nor let his providence be wanting in providing for, and preserving to us that rule of Faith, without which, salvation cannot be attained:* unless we are assured of these things, how know we but that God may have deceived the World with false Miracles? yea, that he hath not Imprinted in us such dispositions as may continually incline us *unto Error?* That he hath not assisted the Apostles, and first Promoters of Christianity in delivering to us a false Scripture, and false Traditions? And certain (Secondly) it is, we have no evidence of these things, but that of Reason, and consequently that the whole certainty of Faith depends upon it; and this is freely acknowledged by Mr. Serjeant, in his fourth Section, where he tells us, *That our assent unto Authority is at last resolved into Reason;* and clearly follows from his grand Assertion, p. 181. *That no Authority (viz. whether of Church, Scripture, or Tradition) deserves assent farther then true reason gives it to deserve;* and consequently it must be beholding to true reason for the assent we yield unto it. And yet I am confidently rebuked for saying, *That if S. C. believes his Church infallible, because his reason judgeth it to be so, the Church is beholden to the judgement of his private reason, for his belief of her infallibility, p. 96. as if her infallibility could be believed on this very account: deserve assent upon no other, and the rationalness of assenting to it could be resolved*

into

into reason, and she not be beholding to the confessed yea the only cause of this assent for the belief of that infallibility, which is the effect thereof; and all this forsooth, *Because I therefore come to have that Judgement of her infallibility, because she as an object wrought upon my apprehension, and imprinted a conceit of her there, as she was in her self, and so obliged my Reason to conclude, and my judgement to hold her such as she is:* pag. 182. A very deep discourse and able to evince that no man is beholding to his Reason for any thing he assents unto, but contrarily his Reason is beholding to the Object for causing that assent. *Seeing that object works upon his apprehension, and imprints a conceit of it self there, as in it self, and so obligeth our Reason to conclude, and our Judgment to hold it such, as it is,* but Sir, is your assent rational, or not? If not 'tis Brutiſh and Absurd, it may be false, nor have you any reason to believe it true. If so, then must you be beholding to your Reason for it.

*Coroll.* Hence I infer, That Reason cannot be rejected, as unsure, and unsufficient to ground an Article of Faith upon; for the certainty of our whole Faith depending upon that of Reason, it must fall together with it. So that to quarrel with the use of Reason upon that account, (as Papists usually do) is in effect to quarrel with Religion and Christianity.

*Prop. 3.* The certainty of Faith, cannot be greater then that of Science or Mathematical Demonstration, for that (supposing only as the foundation of all certitude that my faculties are true and not supernaturally enclined to falsehood) is absolutely certain, and

and such as takes away all matter of a doubt, for who can question the truth of these assertions *that nothing can produce it self, and that from equals, if you take only equals, the remainder will be equal*, both which are conclusions arising with the clearest evidence from that first principle of Science *'tis impossible for the same thing at once to be, and not be*. Now seeing certainty consists in the removal of what is or might be matter of a doubt, (for whilest this matter of doubt remains we are not, and when 'tis once removed, *eo ipso* we arrive at real certainty) and seeing nothing can take off more then all, no certainty can be greater then that which cuts of all matter of a doubt. Nay, secondly, I ask, whether this principle (*viz. it is impossible for the same thing at once to be and not be*) can possibly be doubted whether some Conclusions Scientifical be not immediately and unavoidably derivative from it? (for since all Truths are ultimately resolved into it, some most immediately conclude from it) and whether hence it will not follow, That Scientifical Conclusions may remove all possibility of doubting? Thirdly, all Articles of Faith are ultimately founded upon Reason, by *Prop. 2d*. And so our assent unto them must terminate thereupon, no reason, can be of greater certainty, then a Scientifical Conclusion, as being wholly derived from, and resolvable into that first Principle of Science, *impossibile est idem esse & non esse*. Fourthly, That any Article of Faith is *true or not true*, is a Scientifical Conclusion from that of Logick *one part of contradictories must needs be true*; nor can the truth of any article be greater, then the truth of this, since 'tis impossible to be true, but *eo ipso* it must be true or not true.

When

When therefore you pretend, p. 181. to cleave more heartily and firmly to a point of Faith, than to any conclusion of Science whatsoever, your adherence must outgoe your Reason, for what if Faith depend upon divine veracity, and that be closely applyed by the Church unto you. Seeing it depends also on your assurance of these two Assertions, (1.) That the Divine power could not be engaged to deceive the Church, or attest a falsehood. Which you owe to Reason, And Secondly, That the divine veracity is engaged for that, which you esteem an Article of Faith, which you must owe unto the Eyes and Eares and the Fidelity of other men, since then each Article of Faith attested by Divine Veracity is nevertheless known to be so, partly by reason, which cannot rise beyond a Demonstration, partly by the evidence of sense, and the fidelity of other men, which is not capable of demonstration, it is not possible that your assent which bottoms on them, should exceed its certainty.

But secondly, I affirm, that all our certitude of Faith, is less then that of Science, for notwithstanding all your motives unto Faith, are there not many real Atheists, and secret rejecters of Christianity? Many that are still enquirers, many that labour under continual doubts, and scruples, and have Faith only as a grain of Musterdseed? Yea may we not all cry out with the Disciples, Lord increase our Faith? Produce your motives, manage them with your utmost care, and you will find the Sceptick will still make exceptions, put in his scruples, and ask *might it not be otherwise?* Whereas Science compels assent, puts the intellect beyond a feare, and will not suffer us to scruple or demur upon her Theorems, or labour

hour under the least uncertainty, *Whether one part of contradictories be true, or the three Angles of a Triangle be equal to two right ones.* Sith then 'tis nothing but the clearness of the truth which expels fears and doubts, and 'tis the want of such convictive evidence, which is the cause of their continuance, that certitude must needs be greatest which is most effectual to this end: but 'tis superfluous to insist farther upon that which is so admirably confirmed by Mr *Chillingworth*, p. 291. Ed. ult.

Yea thirdly, I affirm that the certainty of Faith is not so great as that of sense, for all its certainty depends on our assurance *that the deliverers of it were infallibly assisted by the Divine Wisdom in that delivery*, and is not this attested by the Miracles they wrought, the Prophecies they delivered, the Doctrine they taught? And that by sense? Should any of them be questioned must we not recur unto the senses of the Primitive Christians to confirm them? And must they not then be the ultimate Foundation of our Faith? and your tradition? must we not be surer of the proof then the thing proved? And consequently of the evidence of sense then that of Faith, which deriveth from it? If not, why secondly doth our Lord pronounce them rather blessed who believe and have not seen, then *Thomas* who first Saw and Felt, and then Believed? Is it not because they do it upon lesser (though sufficient) evidence? And so their Faith is more illustrious and prayse worthy; 'Twould be more Generous, and Noble, to die in the defence of him whom we did only *probably* believe to be our Prince or Parent, then to do it only upon *infallible assurance* of his being such, because an evidence of greater love, even



*And the use of Reason in matters of Faith.*

Is it more virtuous and prayse worthy to venture all upon an *highly probable* hopes of the truth of Christianity it being such a *pregnant indication* of our true love to Pietie and Vertue, that even a *probable assurance* of it can prevail against all worldly temptations to the contrary: Yea this it is which rendreth Faith *rewardable*, that 'tis an act of the believers choise (and not *irrefragably* induced) however it be abundantly confirmed with arguments *extreamly probable*, and such as render it *perverseness* and *obstinacy* to resist. Thirdly should it be otherwise how cometh it to pass that men are equally assured of what equally they see, but have not the like fulness of perswasion in what they believe? That being once assured of the objects of sence, they can admit of no greater certainty, whereas after all our boasts of a *plerophory of Faith*, we have still need to strive and labour to increase it? Since then the certainty of Faith is proved inferiour to that of Sense, and Science, to pretend infallibility (which is the highest certainty) is to pretend such evidence, as is not competible to Faith. But that the Folly of this pretence may appeare more signally, I shall farther manifest. 1. That Humane nature is not capable of infallible assurance in matters of Faith. Secondly, that to require such assurance unto Faith is contrary to Scripture. Thirdly, That our Saviour required Faith upon lower motives. Fourthly, That the Romanists can have no such assurance. Fifthly, That it is no preiudice to the certainty or reasonableness of Faith, that it is built upon foundations not absolutely infallible. And Lastly, Answer Mr *Serjeants* Exceptions to the contrary. And

1. If Humane Nature (*abstracted from Divinity*)  
be

*Of the certainty of Faith,*

be capable of this assurance, its certainty must be equal to that of Vision, of Angels, of Christs Humanity, yea of God himself, for even their assurance cannot reach beyond infallibility. And secondly, Reason must give as great assurance of a thing revealed to others 1600. years ago, and in it self inevident, as it is possible for present sense or revelation to afford; all which are monstrous absurdities.

Secondly, each Text of Scripture which mentions any that were *weak* or *strong* in Faith, any that were of *little* or of *great* Faith, any that were *rich*, that did *abound*, *encrease*, or *grow* in Faith, any that were *grounded*, *established*, *rooted*, and *confirmed* in Faith, that speaks of having Faith as a grain of *mustard-seed*, and of having *all* Faith, is a demonstrative refutation of this pretence, it being certain that infallibility admits of no degrees. Such secondly, must be every Prayer which the Apostles made, to *encrease* their own and others Faith, or in the language of the Catholick to *advance* it *some* degrees above *infallibility*. Such thirdly, are all those places which tell of Hereticks, who *overthrew* the Faith of some, of others that were *unstable* and *wavering* in the Faith. And lastly, Prophecy that men should *Erre*, and be *seduced* from the Faith, or *depart* from it, *giving heed* to *seducing* spirits, it being as impossible for such who are infallibly assured or guided by what is *self-evident*, even to the *un-reflecting* person, to *Waver*, *Erre*, or be *Seduced*, as to *Doubt* and *Disbelieve* that *twice 2 is 4*, or that if you take equally from equals, they will still be equal.

Thirdly, Our Blessed Saviour required this assent from his Disciples without *Infallible* assurance, for doth he not call them *Fools* and *slow of heart*,  
Luke

Luke 24. 26. for not believing all the Prophets had delivered touching his *Resurrection and Ascension into Glory*? Had they infallible assurance that these Prophecies concerned him yea or no? If not, then did he look upon them as *Fools and slow of hears* for not believing upon motives confessedly fallible; if their assurance might have been infallible, then either as bottomed upon Reason, infallibly concluding his *Ascension and Resurrection* from the Prophets; or secondly upon *Tradition* and the Churches *living voice*; if the first, why may not we also (who have greater assistance of the Spirit of Wisdom) be able from the same Principle of Reason, working on our Rule of Faith, to conclude infallibly the Fundamentals of Christianity? For is it not unreasonable to assert, that the *Resurrection and Ascension* of our Lord is more clearly revealed in those places of the Old Testament, (which are few, obscure, & by reason of the Language more ambiguous than the New, and lastly acknowledged by the greatest part of learned Men to refer primarily to other things or persons) than the Articles of our Creed are in those numerous, and admirably perspicuous places of the New Testament which give in Testimony thereunto? Must they be looked upon as Fools for not infallibly concluding the *Ascension* of our Lord, from the obscure *items* of the Prophets by the help of Reason? And must we be damned for holding Reason sufficient from Scripture to conclude our Creed? Nay secondly, is not this to admit Reason as a competent, yea infallible judge of the Sense of Scripture, and consequently to approve of in the *Jew*, what you condemn and rail at in the *Christian*.

If secondly, you say unto Tradition, Is it not ridiculous

Ridiculous to assert that the Jewish Church should not only Crucifie this Jesus, and endeavour with their utmost power to prevent the Fame of his Resurrection, albeit she had *infallible assurance* of it? But that she should at the same time interpret Scripture so, as *infallibly* to attest it, and be condemned from her own mouth? Nay had they not a contrary Tradition, (viz. *That the Kingdome of their Messias should be Glorious upon Earth*) sufficient to confront all evidence Tradition could afford them in this case, and void her Testimony because repugnant to it self? Secondly, I desire to know whether that voice from Heaven which testified that Jesus was the true *Messiah*, and the Son of God, did not oblige the hearers to believe it? And to what other end it was sent? Whether our Saviour doth not plead it as his Fathers testimony of him (which sure must be sufficient ground of Faith) whether

Saint Peter doth not hence endeavour  
 2 Pet. i. to make good this truth? And there-  
 17, 18, 19. fore, whether his argument doth not  
 oblige us to believe it? And yet whether he doth not peremptorily say, that 'twas confirmed by a *more sure word of Prophecy*? And whether hence it doth not follow that this voice from Heaven was not an evidence most sure? and therefore not infallible; however it were such as did require belief from us, as well as them that heard it? Go now and tell your God and Saviour (what you have told our Church) *That they are guilty of most Absurd, Ridiculous, Irrational, Self-condemned, Damnable, Diabolical Tyranny, and such as Humane Nature can scarce own, for requiring any mans assent to any Point or Proposition whatsoever as evident*

*And the use of Reason in matters of Faith* 13  
in Scripture, without infallible certainty, pag. 196,  
198.

Fourthly, The Evidence which Papists have, or can have of any matter of Faith, is not infallible; for had they infallible Evidence to produce, is it not matter of amazement, that so many millions of persons endowed with Intellects as piercing, and accomplished with all abilities which their Adversaries can boast of; yea, who many of them have all temporal Motives to encline them to believe, and all the Miseries that Papal Tyranny can inflict to awaken them into a serious consideration; nay, who are Men seriously industrious after their salvation, and such as know that they must perish everlastingly, if this indeed be the true and onely rule of Faith which they reject: I say, Is it not matter of amazement, that such persons, from generation to generation, should unanimously reject what offers it self with infallible evidence and assurance even to the most rude, illiterate, and unreflecting person, that is but capable of Christianity? and not onely so, but that they should dispute, and write Books against it, albeit they could never go about to do so, but they must necessarily be convinced infallibly (even as unreflecting Layicks are supposed to be) of the truth of what they thus oppose, which is indeed to say, we were, are, and (whilest Protestants) must be as bad and obstinate as the very Devil: This alone is abundantly sufficient to arm the soul against all temptations unto Popery. Again, the infallibility of your Tradition is bottomed partly upon this foundation, *That your Church thinks her self obliged to deliver nothing but what and so far as she received it from*

*Sure footing, p. 5. s. 10.*

from the former Age and Church : But what assurance of this at present : are there not of your own Party who roundly tell us, That what (a) flourished in the Church for many hundred of Years, is now condemned by her ? That there was a time when the Trent definitions were not (b) *de fide*, yea when the (c) contrary was delivered by the Church : That there was a time when Fathers (d) did, and might teach contrary to what she now delivers, because the Church had not declared her minde : And is not this to give a liberty before the definition of a Council, to deliver to Posterity, even from the first Age to that very moment, what is flatly contradictory to the Churches voice, and to unravel the whole thread you have so finely spun. (e) Are there not those who positively assert, the definition of your Church makes that to be esteemed a matter of Faith, which before was not necessarily to be deemed such ? who lastly say, The definition of your Church is that which makes a fundamental ? how many hundred times have all, or most of these things been Printed,

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(a) Maldonate in *Joh. 6. v. 53. Binius Concil: Tome 1. p. 624. Petavius de la penit: publi. l. 1. c. 7. s. 6. p. 97.*

(b) *Rossensis in consut: Lutheri, p. 496. Biel in Lect: 57. super Canonem missæ Durand. opusc: 15. c. 1. Scotus apud Bellar: de Euchar: l. 3. c. 23.*

(c) *Vid: Potters Answer to charity mistaken, pag. 73 & 74.*

(d) *Non mirum est si isti & nonnulli etiam alii patres re nondam eo tempore satis illustrata in eam Hæresin incidissent Petro Soave, Hist: Concil: Trident: l. 7. p. 575. Petavius in Epiphanius, p. 285.*

(e) *Bellar: l. 4. de Penit: Rom: c. 14. Sec: Res: im: primis.*

**Preach.**

Preached, Licensed in your Church? and yet there is not one of them but bids defiance to your Assertion. But secondly, your infallibility is bottomed upon this, *That 'tis impossible for your Church to be deceived in judging what's Tradition.* Now first, Is it not as certain as the truth of Christianity can make it, that the whole Nation of the Jews did erre, and that most dangerously, pretending a Tradition of that nature which rendred them uncapable of embracing the *Messiah*? Now what was the sad fate of these *Traditionary Catholicks*, scattered not onely over *Jury*, but through all the *World*? why may it not be *Romes*? When *Arianism* prevailed so much upon the *World*, as to fright the *Orthodox Professors* into *Dens* and *Caves*, when it had defiled almost all the *World*, and ali (except a very few) obeyed it: Was it impossible in that juncture of Affairs they should pretend Tradition for their Faith? doth not your (f) *Cardinal Perroon*, and their own *Epistle* shew they did? (g) *Our Faith*, say they, is kept as a *Patrimony* handed down from the *Apostles times* by their immediate *Successors*, even to the days of our *Fathers*: And must that be impossible to be done by the *Church of Rome*, which we see done in so great an instance? How oft did *East* and *West* plead contrary Traditions, and impeach each other for walking (h) *παρὰ τὴν ἐκκλησιαστικὴν ἀκολουθίαν*? In the beginning of the fatal breach between them, either the Plea

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(f) *Answ: to Du Pleſſis, L. 2. c. 7.*

(g) Καθάπερ κληρὸν τινα τὴν ἐν ᾧ Ἀποστολικὴν χάριν διαθήκετο τῷ μίσθῳ ἄχρι καὶ ἡμῶν Πατέρων. ὧνδε ἔδμενοι πιστὴν φυλάσσομεν. *Epist: Pseudosynodi Ancyranæ* and *Epiph: p. 847.*

(h) *Synod: Const: in Trullo, Can: 55.*

of Tradition was deserted, or falsely pretended by one party; and what impossibility can there be, that what happened to the one should be found incident to the other? And to adde no more, Is it not (i) ordinary in the Schools to hear contrary Sects, and Parties, pretending to the Tradition of the Church of God with equal confidence? Should now the prevailing Party of a General Council be made up of either of these Sects? Were it impossible for them to define and deliver for Tradition to Posterity, what they, according to their *private* (but *misguided*) Judgement esteemed to be such? Must it be possible for many hundreds of *Lateran* or *Basil*, *Nice* or *Constantinople*, to pretend Tradition falsely (because in contradiction to each other) and shall it not be possible for 52 Bishops met at *Trent* to do so?

But what if she hath actually deceived us, Is it infallibly evident that she cannot do what she hath done already, and that as sure as History can make it? For in the sixteenth Century, we have several Translations of the Bible, set forth with special Prefaces before them (such were that of *Santes Pagninus*, the *Dominician* at *Lyons*, that of *Antonius Braciotus* in *Italy*) every one delivering, and declaring the distinction that we make, and was then commonly receiv'd, between the Canonical Books of Scri-

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(i) *Frequenter contingit unum Theologum constantissime asserere se habere Theologicam demonstrationem de aliquo dogmate & illud deducere per evidentem consequentiam ex sacris literis & traditionibus patrum, alium vero per oppositum certissime affirmare se habere demonstrationem Theologicam, quod illud sit haeresis. Nec solum hoc contingit inter duos singulares Theologos sed inter unam Scholam cum alterâ. Gonzales in 1. disp. 2, 2. N. 34.*

pture,



pture, and Apocryphal; nay, in that famous Edition of the compleat Bibles set forth by *Ximinius* the Cardinal, and Arch-Bishop of *Toledo* in *Spain*, and published by the Authority of *Pope Leo*, we are told, that *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom*, *Ecclesiasticus*, and the *Macchabees*, with the additions to *Hester* and *Daniel*, are no Canonical Scripture, but such as the Church read, rather for edification of the people, then confirmation of her Faith. Yea, the vulgar Bible printed at *Basil*, with *Lyra's* Commentary, and the ordinary Gloss, do not onely number her Books Canonical, and un Canonical as we do, putting that difference between them as be ween what is *dubious*, and what is *certain*; but farther tells us, That she did it for the Information of them who being not much used to Scripture, did not know how to put a difference betwixt them, and so became ridiculous to the Learned. *Picus Mirandula* assures us, That the Testimony of *St. Jerome* in this matter (which punctually accords with us, even our Adversaries being Judges) was esteemed most sacred by the Church. And Cardinal *Caietan* (that common Oracle of the days he lived in) saith as expressly, *What he received into the Canon that do we; what he re-*

*jected, we also do reject*: Nay, that the Latine Church was very much obliged to *S. Jerome*, who by making this distinction, had freed us from the reproaches of the Jews; lest them no ground to say of her (what now they may of the Latine Church) That she had forged a new Canon of her own, with which the Jews had no acquaintance: 'Tis true, *Catharinus* opposed this Sentence, as being contrary to what one or two Popes had held before him: but he was presently

*Admitto igitur Hieronymum in ea fuisse opinionem, Bellar: de verbo Dei. l. 1. c. 10.*

derided for it by one of his Brother Monks, as an *unlearned fellow*. And to conclude, *Johannes Ferus*, in his Book called *An Examination of Persons to be Ordained*, informs them of *nine Apocryphal Books* (the same which are so called by our Church) which were not anciently used in the Church, and whose Authority was not pressing: To him you may adde *Faber Stapulensis*, *Jodochus Clichtovæus*, *Ludovicus Vives*, *Fr: Georgius*, *Erasmus*, and *Driedo*, all in this sixteenth Century: This being so, Can any man imagine that the *Canonical Authority* of these Books was look'd upon in this Century, as an *Apostolick Tradition* by the Church of *Rome*, and a thing necessary to be taught Posterity? and yet they are pronounced *Canonical* by a few Men at *Trent*, in the same Century; and a Tradition is pretended for it in defiance to their own and other Churches: If then we cannot be infallibly assured, that the Church of *Rome* kept to Tradition when she most pretended it (yea, are abundantly certain, That in her first Decree she contradicted the prevailing Doctrine of that very age) What assurance can we reasonably expect that she always did so?

Obj: The Attestation of One thousand Men of good repute, touching a matter pretended to be seen by them, and confirmed by their Oath, obligeth to belief: And must not then the Attestation of the Church of *Rome*, incomparably more ample, render the matter so indubitable as that only irrational, vicious, and wilfully blinde persons can recede from it by unbelief? p. 196,

197.

[Answe]

*Ans.* (1.) I desire to know, Whether it were absolutely impossible that One thousand hypocritical Pharisees should have procured the repute of honest men? it being Proverbial amongst the Jews, *That if Heaven were designed but for two persons, the one would be a Scribe, the other a Pharisee*: or whether it were absolutely impossible for One thousand of such persons (who were confessedly guilty of greater sins, and frequently accustomed to swear a lye by any thing but the name Jehovah) to attest falshood with an Oath? and if not, Why should it be impossible to our *Modern Pharisee*, who can equivocate as well as he? Whether the Priests of *Apollio* were not many Thousands in the World? Whether they might not be reputed honest Men? and whether it were impossible for them to consent in an Attestation of such a falshood which might gain reputation to that Idol? especially, considering that the Frauds and Artifices of the Priests, were the usual ways of keeping up the credit of their Idol-worship.

Secondly, In some cases such a Testimony will oblige unto Belief: But what if these Witnesses should be confronted by the Testimony of Two thousand equally judicious and Pious Men? What if these Witnesses should vary in their Testimonies, and when met in Councils contradict each other? What if Scripture and History delivered to us from the unquestionable Tradition of many Millions, of which this Thousand were a part, should manifestly condemn them of a lye? What if the thing they undertook to testify, depended not entirely on their Attestation, but required also the Testimony of the next Age, and so up to the Apostles days? What if

the Attestation were visibly for their own Interest? or they were partly ignorant of what they did Attest? Would not all or any of these things sufficiently null their evidence, and yet this is manifestly the case of your Churches Testimony.

Fifthly, It is no sufficient prejudice against the reasonableness or certainty of Faith, to confess it to be built upon foundations not absolutely infallible: This is the natural result of what hath been already proved, but 1. That it is no prejudice unto the prudence and reasonableness of our Faith, is sufficiently concluded hence, That the most weighty Affairs of Life are built upon Foundations not absolutely such. No Child hath an infallible assurance of his Parents, no Subject of his Prince; and would it not be madness hereupon to deny Obedience and Homage to them? our Title to our Estates derived from Ancestors, our assurance of the Laws of the Land we live in, is but *moral*; nevertheless, to doubt or question them upon this account, would be extremely foolish: moreover, Reason and Prudence oblige us to believe what is highly credible, and exceedingly more probable than it's contrary: And sure it is, That Christian Religion is upon various accounts more credible, and built on grounds incomparably more rational than either irreligion, or any contrary Religion can pretend to, and consequently I stand bound in Prudence to embrace it.

*Obj: But what is fallible may be false; and if so, you have no certainty that it will be true.*

*Ans: What is fallible (not because equally poised betwixt truth and falsehood, but) onely because not demonstrable by Mathematical mediums, or because the*

contrary doth not imply a contradiction, may yet be of sufficient certainty to produce assurance: The judgement of sense cannot be proved infallible to the *Sceptick*; he will argue from experience, That it may once or twice deceive you, and thence, that 'tis not absolutely impossible that it should frequently do so; that it may deceive you for a minute, and then ask what infallible assurance you can have that it cannot do so for five, ten, twenty minutes: If you reply, *Your senses are infallible, but with such limitations, as having a due medium, Organ distance, and the like*, he will call for your *infallible assurance*, that neither God, nor the devil, do at any time infect the *Medium*, distort the *Eye*, alter the *Species*, and the like. Now tell me, notwithstanding this denial of the infallibility of Sense, Whether we have any just temptation to question what we daily see and hear? Whether he that walks in *London-streets* may not be certain that he sees a Man or Woman? and yet, less reason had the Primitive Christians to distrust those Miracles which for some Hundreds of Years employed not onely their own Senses, but the Eyes and Ears of all the World. Again, The testimony of ten, yea of an hundred Men is fallible (as we have seen already;) and hence 'tis evident, That the testimony of Two hundred, yea a Thousand may be so; for seeing all you adde is fallible, their Testification must be so: Tell me now, Whether I have reason to distrust the Existence of such a Man as *Alexander, Mahomet*, or that the Alcoran was published by him? if not, What reason can I have to doubt of what's delivered to me with greater evidence of general Tradition touching Scripture & Christianity? you see now what little ground of fear our Doctrine gives you that it  
might

might happen to be otherwise, p. 196. because we dare not pretend infallibility, even as little as you have to fear the constant Testimony of sense, or your own sure footing. And when you adde, That 'tis a damnable and diabolical Tyranny, to oblige men to the hazards of falsehoods in the matters of Faith, and in the mean time, profess our selves ignorant whether they be false or no.

*Ans<sup>w</sup>*: True: And 'tis as great a falsehood that we do so. No Sir, in matters Fundamental we profess as much assurance as Scripture and Tradition can afford; in matters which admit not of the greatest Evidence, we oblige not unto Faith, but to Submission and Obedience; and in neither do we profess (what you so dis-ingeniously impose upon us) That we are ignorant whether they be false or no.

## C A P. I I.

*Of the Guide of Faith.*

*Prop. I.* **T**HAT Reason still must be my guide after it hath brought me to my Rule of Faith; and were it otherwise (since we have no express from the old Testament that *Jesus of Nazareth* or the *Son of Joseph* was to be the Saviour of the world) why are we sent to Scripture to be convinced of it? Why is this word of *Prophecy* esteemed a surer evidence thereof than a voice from Heaven? *John 5. 39.*

Why doth our Saviour quarrel with the Jew for not concluding that from Scripture which was not to be found expressly there? Or rebuke the slowness of his own Disciples to believe all the Prophets had delivered touching his Death, his Resurrection, and Ascention into Glory? *2 Pet. I. 17.*

When visibly they could not do it without comparing circumstances, and using a long train of inferences? Why lastly, are the *Beræans* so much commended for their search of Scripture, & Judgement of *Pauls* Doctrine thence, seeing his business was to prove that *Christ must needs have suffered, & be raised from the dead, & that Jesus was the Christ.* *Matt. 22. 29.*

*Act. 17. 3. 11.* should this way be rejected as fallacious, and unsufficient to establish faith? In vain must be *Apollons* wisdom endeavouring hence to convince the Jew that *Jesus was the Christ, Act. 18. 22.*

And 'twas their weakness to be over-powred by it.

it, whilst he produced no express from Scripture; in vain did *Peter*, attempt to prove the Resurrection of our Lord from that of *David*, *Thou wilt not leave my Soul in Hell*; *Act. 2. 27.* and *S. Paul* to convince the Jew by *Reasoning from Scripture*, *Act 17. 2.* In vain did he compose his whole Epistle to the *Hebrews*, so full of Rational deductions thence; in a word to infer the unlawfulness of Divorce for any cause from that of *Genesis*, *They twain shall be one flesh*, of *Corban* from that of *Moses*, *Honor thy Father and thy Mother*; to infer the Lawfulness of plucking ears of corn upon the Saboth, from *Dauids* eating the *Shew-bread*; And lastly to conclude the Resurrection from that of *Moses*, *I am the God of Abraham*, must be according to the contrary Assertion to argue upon Grounds fallacious, and to interpret Scripture against or else besides the tenour of the Churches voice.

Secondly, If Reason may not be my Guide in these conclusions as well as others, then (1.) must not all Arguments produced by the Romanist against our Church, or upon any other subject, be pronounced null; when bottomed only on the inferences of Humane Reason, from the Rule of Faith, and must not Vanity be writ upon the labours of their greatest Champions? Must it not follow that no promise of the Scripture, can administer comfort, no threatening terror, to the Soul, that is not either expressly contained in it, or otherwise ascertained and expounded to us from the Tradition of the Church? And must not then the greatest part of Scripture-threatnings prove *bruta fulmina*, and its Promises be as un-significative? And thirdly might not Jew, and Gentile, Sadducy, and Pharisy have still excepted



pted against Christ & his Apostles (whose infallibility they little dreamt of) for making *faith* depend on the fallacious deductions of their Reasons, & for moulding Scripture according to their *Dædælean Phancies* in opposition to the Churches living voice. Had Mr S. been a Traditionary Catholick or (which is much the same) a Pharisee in those days, he would have doubly schoold them, (1.) For *chusing a wrong rule of Faith* (viz. Scripture) so to avoid the Church: and next for *glossing it as seems best unto their Reasons and that in opposition to the Church: who by her practical tradition must interpret.* Sure footing. p. 193.

Prop. 2. That to assert Reason as my Guide in matters of Faith, is not to resolve Faith into humane Reason, for *Faith is properly resolved into its Principal efficient, or formal object*, which is not Reason, but to the Protestant Divine Veracity, to the Catholick the Churches voice, for aske the Protestant why he believes such Articles, or asserts their truth, he presently replies *because revealed in Scripture by that God who cannot lye*; whereas the Catholick must Answer *because revealed by that Tradition or that Churches voice which is infallible*, to assure me of the Churches voice is the business of my Eyes, and eares, to ascertain me of the infallibility of that voice is the work of Reason; Is now the faith of Catholicks resolved into their eyes or ears? Is it resolved into the use of Reason, and not into the Churches voice? If not, why must this be objected to the Protestant, because his Reason doth assist him to evince his Scripture to be the product of Divine Veracity? If then you take this prayse in its largest sense, as it imports the *enquiry into all its causes in their severall kinds*, both Catholicks and Protestants do  
resolve

resolve their faith into humane Reason, as giving them assurance of the infallibility both of Scripture and Tradition, if in its proper notion as it implies the *principal efficient cause of Faith*, 'tis evident that neither of them do it. Nevertheless I freely grant that all the certainty of our Faith in things not punctually expressed in Scripture, depends upon the certainty of our Reason working upon the never sayling Rules of Logick, which as it is no disparagement to the certainty of Faith; so is it a thing common unto us with Catholicks, who must acknowledge with my good Friend, *That many things have been delivered by the Church which were not formally contained in her tradition or the Rule of Faith, but only thence concluded by the help of Reason.* Sure Footing. p. 206.

Prop. 3. The Fundamentals of Christianity (*i. e.* all doctrines necessary to the Salvation of each person) delivered in the Rule of Faith, must be both evident, and obvious to the eye of Reason, for seeing the proper end of a Rule is to regulate and direct, and nothing unevident, and obscure whilst such can do that office unto those, to whom it is so, (for this were to require the intellect to be regulated by what it cannot know to be a rule) what ever is the the Rule of Faith (and so of Fundamentals) must evidently declare them to such persons to whom it is a rule, and is it not monstrous to imagine that God should have suspended our Salvation and Christ the very being of his Church on what's obscure, and void of evidence? And secondly seeing what is not obvious cannot be evident to such persons as are unable to search into the depths of Reason, and see into the coherence of a continued train of

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of consequences, that this Rule may be 'evident to such, it must be obvious, Obvious I say in delivering the affirmative heads of Christian Faith, not in affording means to extricate the understanding from all the Sophistry of a Learned Adversary, which to require from the Rule of Faith ( especially as applyed to the illiterate person and his certainty thereof ) is as absurd, and monstrous as to require in order to his certainty that he sees, walks, or hears, that he should have ability to Answer all the quirks of Zeno, and demurs of a Gascendus to the contrary. As therefore in these matters the clear and immediate evidence of sense is a sufficient preservative to the rudest person from all the Sophisms of Zeno, and his Academy; even so the full and pregnant evidence of Fundamentals, (especially if joynd with that internal evidence of the Holy Spirit which is promised by our Saviour to all those that do his will) is sufficient settlement unto the meanest person capable of Religion against all the Fallacies of a Subtle Heretick.

*Coroll.* Hence I conceive it Sophistically objected by my Friend, *That we prove and defend our Faith by skils and languages, history, and humane learning and so make them our Rule of Faith.* For we aver the Fundamentals of our Faith are so perspicuously revealed in Scripture as to need no farther skill to apprehend them, then what is necessary to understand that language in which our Rule of Faith is writ, yea what is equally necessary to understand the Churches voice which constantly is delivered by her representatives in Greek or Latine, and therefore the preceding skils are not of absolute necessity to Faith in General, but only to some portions of

it of which we may be ignorant without considerable prejudice to our eternal welfare; (of which nature is the legitimacy of Baptism conferr'd by Hereticks, the *Millenium* &c.) and if we use such mediums in matters of the highest nature, we do it still *ex abundanti*, either to conclude the same things from obscurer places, which are perspicuously revealed elsewhere, or to obviate the evasions, and confute the cavils of the Heretick, all which the Catholick doth and must do, both when engaged with him, and us.

Thus when again he tels us, *That our Rule is deal Characters, waxen-natured, and plyable to the Dedalean Phancy of the ingenious moulders of new opinions,* p. 194.

*Ans.* 'Tis true some passages there are in it which are, & may be wrested to such evil purposes, but still the Fundamentals of our Faith are such as are by no means plyable to any other sence.

*Prop. 4.* Reason in judging of the sence of Scripture is regulated partly by principles of Faith, partly by Tradition, partly by Catholick maxims of her own.

1. By Principles of Faith, for Scripture is to be interpreted *secundum analogiam Fidei*, that is (say we) particular Texts of Scripture, when dubious are so to be interpreted, as not to contradict the Fundamentals of Faith, or any doctrine which evidently and fully stands asserted in the Word of God. And 2ly since Scripture cannot contradict it self; When any Paragraph of Scripture absolutely considered is ambiguous, that sence must necessarily obtain which is repugnant to no other paragraph, against what may be so, and thus may Scripture regulate

gulate me in the sense of Scripture, and what I know of it, lead me to the sense of what I do not.

Secondly, By tradition, for since tradition is necessary to assure us that there were once such men as the Apostles who delivered that Christianity, and these Scriptures to us which we now embrace, to question the sufficiency of the *like tradition*, to assure me of the sense of Scripture, is virtually to call in question the motives which induce us to believe it such; this then would be an excellent help unto the sense of Scripture, only the mischief is that where it can be had, we do not want it, and where we want it 'tis but too visible it cannot be had: Note only that I speak here of a *like tradition*, to which two things are requisite. *First*, That it be as general as that of Scripture. And *Secondly*, That it be such as evidenceth it self by Reason, to have been no forgery (as here it doth, it being morally impossible that the whole Church, in the delivery of Scripture to us, should deceive or be deceived.) For the infallibility of Tradition doth not consist entirely in the delivery of such a Doctrine, but in the assurance which it gives my reason, that it could not possibly have been embraced upon other terms. The Baptism of Infants is at present (as the communicating of Infants was of old) the tradition of the Church, but this gives no unquestionable assurance of the truth, or derivation of these customs from our Lord, and his Apostles, for haply the Church embraced them upon other motives; The 1. from a conceived analogy therein to Circumcision, The 2d from a mistake of that of the Evangelist *except you eat my flesh &c.*

*Coroll.* Hence you may see how injurious my  
Friend

Friend is, in representing us as rejectors of Tradition, whereas we manifestly own it where we can have assurance of it, only we dare not boast of it, as the Papist doth where 'tis notoriously evident that both do want it, we own the constant not the present Tradition of the Church.

*Corol. 2.* Hence see the stability of the Faith of Protestants above that of Papists: The Protestant first denyes the Tradition which the Catholick pretends to, to be sufficient ground of Faith; And 2dly, he denyes the Articles of his Faith to have the least *Sure-footing* in Tradition, or his Rule of Faith nay proves them wholly opposite unto it; the Papist doth acknowledge that even by his own, the Protestants Rule of Faith, must be infallibly certain, and pronounceth her Anathema, upon ail who do not own both Scripture and Tradition for infallible, and receive them both *pari pietatis affectu*, with the like pious affection, as the *Trent Council* phraseth it, *Seff. 4.* The Papists Faith is not to be found in the Protestants Rule of Scripture, and this necessitates him to flie unto Tradition, but the Protestants Creed and all his fundamentals are confessedly certain from the Papists Rule; if therefore prudence doth direct us to the safer way, and that be such which both sides do agree upon, (which they so frequently insist on to pervert the people) it must be every mans concern to be a (Protestant rather then a Papist.

Thirdly, Reason is herein guided by her proper Maxims, and cannot rationally admit of any thing as the sense of Scripture, which is apparently repugnant to them; for seeing 'tis impossible to yield a rational assent without reason, it must be  
more

more impossible to do it against reason. Besides, right Reason must be true, and therefore should a Revelation be manifestly repugnant unto right Reason, it must equally be opposed to truth.

Thirdly, Do we not all endeavor to give Reasons of our Faith? Would we not all be thought to follow it, when we conclude our Faith from Scripture or Tradition? Should we renounce her conduct, might not the worst absurdities be imbraced as the sense of Scripture, and finde their Patrimony from thence, without all fear of refutation from that Reason, which must not be admitted to dispute its sense? must it not follow, That no Controversie could be determined, no Dispute resolved, no Contest about the sense of Scripture finde an issue from any rational procedure?

*Obj: But doth not the Mystery of the Sacred Trinity, the Resurrection of the Body, the Hypostatical Union, speak Contradictions unto Humane Reason? Why therefore do you not expunge them from among the Articles of your Faith?*

*Ans<sup>r</sup>:* These things, as far as Scripture doth assert them, are lyable to no immediate Contradictions; but if your Curiosity proceed to dive into the Modes of their Existence, you will presently discourse your self into perplexing Difficulties, not in these onely, but most other Matters: That God is omnipresent, speaks no contradiction to my Reason; but to enquire into the Modus of this Presence, is to be lost in mazes of them: That he hath infinite Duration, is a necessary truth; but to call this Duration momentaneous or successive, is to lay a foundation for endless Contradictions; to assert Gods Omniscience, is to assert a most received Article

ticle of our Faith, but how this knowledge can consist with the contingency of things, is beyond humane infirmity to shew, that there is such a thing as motion we all see, but whether it be a mode, quality, or substance, successive only, or instantaneous, continued or intermixt with morula's, needs an *Elias* to resolve us; that there is quantity and corporeal Beings in the world, our senses can assure us, but how their parts are knit unto each other, and how far they may be divided, is indeed a Philosophick Trinity, 'tis then no prejudice to the fore-mentioned Articles, that we may discourse them into contradictions, since this is common to them, with the most ordinary things our senses view, the reason of these perplexing difficulties in matters of this nature, may happily be the exceeding greatness or parvitude of the thing, which renders it impossible for us to frame Ideas. of them, from any thing which occurs unto our senses; and consequently to pass judgment on them, thus all the difficulties both of quantity and motion are bottomed upon instants and indivisibles, and that which gravels still the mind in the consideration of a Deity, is the infinity of his nature, and therefore these affections of Goodness, Wisdom, and Mercy &c. Which we stile communicable, when once infinity is annexed to them, do as much bejale the intellect, as that amazing mystery of the holy Trinity; but secondly,

*Ans.* 2. That Reason cannot think it proper to apply her maxims to these instances, and consequently cannot judge them repugnant thereunto. This will appear from these conclusions,

1. That Reason Guided by her own maxims,  
Tradition



Tradition and by Scripture, assures me that the divine nature is incomprehensible, it being impossible that what is finite should comprehend what is infinite, and certainly if Mathematicks have her Paradoxes, and can vie demonstrations *pro* and *con*, if matters obvious to sense do so bejate the intellect, and lock it up in contradictions, 'tis little to be hoped she should convey her self through the infinite abyss of of divine perfections, and not suffer shipwreck.

2. That infinite perfection may deliver such things of it self which are incomprehensible, because it may deliver what in it self it is.

3. That Reason cannot pretend to judge by her own maxims, of the Truth or Falsehood of what she doth acknowledge to exceed her reach; For sure she cannot reasonably pretend to know what thus exceeds her knowledge, much less to judge of what she doth not know?

4. That Reason cannot conclude that to be repugnant to her maxims which she acknowledgeth to be such of which her maxims cannot judge, for this is to apply these maxims where they ought not to be applied, and to frame consequences upon terms whereby the things they signifie are not understood, and in effect to reject the proportions of the Sun and Stars unto the Earth, which Mathematicks gives us as repugnant to the sense.

5. That notwithstanding this, Reason doth force me to attribute to God all that is perfection, and remove the contrary, he being therefore incomprehensible because infinite in perfection; whence albeit I do not comprehend his nature, yet can I rationally conclude him not corporeal, because that

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necessarily

necessarily subjects him to varietie of imperfections.

6. This doth not prejudice the use of Reason in other matters, any more then the Aymptoticks of the Mathematicks, the *crucis logicorum*, the *Insolubilia* of other sciences do prejudice our getting knowledge in these matters, by the use of Reason.

*Corol.* Hence evident it is, That Scripture must not alwaies be interpreted according to the Letter, or Grammatical importance of the words, because that often is contradictory both to reason, tradition, and the Analogie of Faith, this cannot be disputed by any person who is not professedly industrious to render Scripture odious and ridiculous, there being nothing more abhorrent from humane nature then some Scriptures are in their Grammaticall importance, but you object,

*Ob.* If Reason must guide you sometimes so as to deny the clear letter of Scripture (or to deny the Spouse of Christ, is properly whatever she is stiled in the Canticles) by what principles must Reason be regulated in this enquiry, Whether God hath hands and feet, &c. pag. 193.

*Ans.* 1. By Principles of Faith, or those perspicuous Scriptures, which dogmatically aver that *he is a Spirit invisible, and without all shape, & lastly, attribute unto him many things repugnant to a body, & this you see is done antecedently to the known sence of some Scriptures, though not of all.* And 2. by Reason, assuring me that corporeity is incompatible with that power, which is every where infinite: That it is an imperfection, and so not incident to this all-perfect Being; that it interferes with his simplicity and independance, degrades him beneath the ranke of Angels,

Angels, and humane Souls, which Scriptures represent as incorporeal, that to ascribe such Phrases properly unto him, must represent him the worst of Monsters (as having wings and seaven eyes, and putting on more shapes then ever *Proteus* did) and render his reproofs of Heathen Images irrational and absurd.

*Ob. But is not this to flie back for refuge to the old rule Humane Reason, which you seemingly renounced when you had found your new Rule of Faith.*

*Ans.* Its power to pass judgement of the truth of what is revealed in Scripture I did, and do renounce, its assistance in finding out the sence of Scripture, I cannot renounce without the forfeiture of Reason.

*Corol. 2.* Hence it must follow, that to be expressly contained in Scripture, is not to be the mind of God contained in Scripture, for that God is a *Shepherd* and a *Roaring Lyon*, a *Lanthorn*, and a *wall of fire*, that he begat *Israel*, and doth continue to beget Believers. That the *Messiah* is a *Lamb*, a *Lyon*, and a *Stag*, a *Worm*, *Plant*, *Eagle*, *Root*, and *Cedar*, this and much more is expressly told us from Scriptures letter, but to infer hence that Reason guided by Scripture cannot otherwise interpret them, but it must *Violently wrest* the Scripture, and be so absolutely the Rule of Faith, as to controule and baffle Scripture though clearly revealing, p. 192. is to make Christ the worst of Monsters, to out do all the Fables of the Poets, and represent the God of Heaven more ridiculous then an Heathen *Jupiter*. Secondly, I desire to know whether the Church of Rome doth own and sence these places according to the letter, or *contradict and wrest, baffle and controul the clearest revelations*

relations of the word of God by doing otherwise.

*Qu.* But if to be in express terms in Scripture, be not to be clearly revealed there, what is it to be thus revealed.

*Ans.* 'Tis manifestly to be the mind of God contained in Scripture. Which being so if you continue to imagine that every thing contained in Scriptures letter, is clearly manifested to be the mind of God in Scripture, then must you either contradict what is clearly manifested so to be, or cut off hands, and feet, and pluck out eyes, that you may be Christs Disciple: if you enquire farther amidst all the varietie of Tropes and Figurative Expressions used in Scripture, how any thing can be manifested to be the mind of God revealed: I Answer, by the very same means and circumstances, by which we know the mind of one another, notwithstanding all the variety of Tropes and Figures, which we use in ordinary Discourse or Writing, how often doth the Divine, the Poet, the Historian, and especially the Orator flourish in all the arts of Rhetorick, and Grace his subject with the chiosest flowers of Eloquence, and yet presents it in a dress as clear, as it is pleasant, and were not men wilfully perverse, they would have less reason to complain of the obscurity of the Scripture in matters necessary to Salvation, upon this account.

When therefore you thus Argue, *That God hath Hands, Feet, Nostrils, is plainly writ in your Rule of Faith, p. 121.* and therefore is revealed in it; the inference must be weak, & the Foundations of it are already overturned. And yet however you suppose it, all along, I peremptorily deny that it is positively asserted in any Scripture, that God hath Hands, Feet,

Feet; Nostrils. True, we are told the Heavens are the Workmanship of his hands &c. But to infer it from such places would force you to acknowledge that the Word of God is Milk, and that Milk is Rational, because Saint Paul hath filed it *γαλακτολογικόν*. Here therefore is no need to *captivate my Reason*, much less to Answer as you would have me, *That the contrary is plain in Scripture too, pag. 191.* and so that Scripture holds forth plainly contradictions, this Answer so dishonourable to God and Scripture, so repugnant unto Faith, Reason and Tradition I permit to be your own.

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CHAP.

## CHAP. III.

*Of the Rule of Faith.*

*Prop: 1.* **S**Eeing Divine Faith, in the proper import of the words, is *an assent to Divine Authority revealed*, whatever I assent to, as an Article of Faith, I must assent to as being the revealed will of God; whence evident it is, That the mind or will of God revealed, and nothing else, must be my Rule of Faith. Again, What is the proper office of a Rule, but to examine what is to be ruled by it? Must we not pass a Judgement on our Weights and Measures, by bringing them to the Rule and Standard? In like manner, Do we not examine each Theological conclusion by this Enquiry, Whether it be the minde of God revealed or not, and from the Answer made unto it, pass Judgement on the thing in Question? This therefore is the Rule of every Theological conclusion: And so of Faith.

*Corol. 1.* Hence it will follow, That not Tradition, but the minde of God revealed in Scripture, or Tradition, is the Rule of Faith: And indeed, Tradition (were it as certain as Mr. S. supposeth it) would be the formal Object, but not the Rule of Faith, which two things are miserably confounded through the whole Series of my Friends Discourse, as will appear from the distinctive Characters of them both, as they are excellently given us in the Learned Baron, *Apoll: p. 34. S. 6.*

First then, A Rule is that Exemplar by which the minde

minde is regulated, and to which it ought to be conformable; and so the Rule of Faith is that Exemplar which we ought to follow, and conform unto in Matters of Faith: Now such apparently is the mind of God revealed in general, nor is the voice of Christ, or of Tradition such, but on presumption that they are the minde of God revealed.

Secondly, The Rule doth limit, and determine what is ruled by it; even so the Rule of Faith must fix the Bounds of Faith, instructing us what and how many are the material Objects of it.

Thirdly, The effect of the Rule of Faith, is that knowledge which preceeds the act of Faith; for it informs the Intellect, by proposing to it what is requisite to be believed, but not evincing it to be such.

Fourthly, The Rule of Faith is onely a comprehensive Systeme of all the Articles of Faith, as the Rules of Grammer are a comprehensive Systeme of such things as are to be observed in composing Latine, Greek, &c. Now all these things do visibly agree unto the minde of God revealed, but are as visibly inconsistent with Tradition, as it imports a deli-

*very down from hand to hand of the sence and Faith of Fathers to their Children; for, not the Tradition, but the τὸ traditum, or Faith delivered is the minde of God revealed, and consequently the Rule of Faith. But now the formal Object is that which causeth us to believe the Rule of Faith; and in my Friends expression, applys with certainty Divine Authority to my understanding, p. 181. which sure is the pretended business of Tradition, and the whole intendment of sure footing.*

Sure footing, p. 41.

*Cor: 2.* Hence evident it is, That *Scriptures Letter*, as abstracted from the sense included, cannot possibly be the Rule of Faith, because, as such, it cannot be the minde of God revealed: and when my Friend concludes, p. 13. *We cannot own the sense or things contained in Scripture for the Rule of Faith, because they are the very Points of Faith, of which the Rule of Faith is to ascertain us:* He gives a pregnant Instance of that ignorance of the term I charge him with, for evident it is from what we have discoursed, That the Rule of Faith is onely a Collection of the Points of Faith, and that its business is not to ascertain, but propound what is ascertain'd by the formal Object; nay, may I not conclude with parity of Reason, that the Churches voice, abstracted from the signification or import of it is to the Catholick the Rule of Faith, because the matters signified by that voice are the very Points of Faith of which the Churches voice is to ascertain us.

*Corol: 3.* Hence we may rectifie these loose conceptions of the Rule of Faith, so frequent in the Animadversions of Mr. S. thus when he asks, p. 188. *Is not that speaking formally and properly the Rule of Faith, which gives us Christs sense,*

*Ans<sup>r</sup>.* That is indeed the Rule of Faith, which gives Christs sense subjectively, so as to contain, and be the minde of Christ revealed in Scripture, not that which gives it, onely by declaring the importance of the words in which this sense is cloathed; for then each Pamphlet of this nature must be a Rule of Faith unto the Reader, each Mass Priest to the illiterate Papist, each *Nomenclator*, *Postiller*, and *Comment* to the Mass-Priest as oft as they explain unto him the sense and meaning of his Rule of Faith.

Thus



Thus when again we are intreated to consider, *That a Rule to such an effect, is the immediate knowledge to the power as conversant about the effect*, p. 190. From what hath been delivered we conclude such knowledge, cannot be the rule but the effect thereof (even as my skill in making syllogisms is the effect of *logick rules*) V. G. I doubt of such a truth, put case the Divinity of Christ, the effect is conviction, the mind of God revealed in Scripture is my rule, this rule informs my knowledge, & that knowledge produceth the assent.

Cor. 4. Hence evident it is that neither Reason, nor skill in Arts or Sciences is made our Rule of Faith, because we do not look upon them as the mind of God revealed, or any part thereof. 'Tis true my Friend endeavours to fasten this upon us, but by such *mediums* as shew too evidently he was not well acquainted with the terms he used. And first, That Reason and its Maxims are our Rule of Faith, he thus endeavours to conclude : p. 190. *He that judgeth must have some principles in his head by which he is regulated in making such a judgement, those principles then must be his Rule in that action, and if that judgement be an adhesion to the point of Faith (that is if the cause be the effect, for no man adheres to any point of Faith, till he hath judg'd it to be such) these principles are his Rule of Faith; now do not Protestants oft conclude the sence of Scripture from maxims of their Humane Reason?*

Ans. (Besides the blunder which my Parenthesis takes notice of) we have a greater weakness in this Argument : For it supposeth all by which my judgement is assisted in determining of what is Faith, or finding out the sence of any Scripture to be my Rule of Faith. (and therefore is as effectual to perswade the

the *Gallenist* his skill in Greek, is his Rule for Pra-  
 ise, as inabling him to finde out certainly the rules  
 of *Galen*) whereas to be the Rule of Faith is a  
 thing proper to these Principles, which contain the  
 material Objects of Faith.

Secondly, I desire to know whether your conti-  
 nual Disputes (managed by Maxims of your private  
 Reason) touching the sence of almost every Ca-  
 non of the *Trent*, and other Councils, whose de-  
 finitions you embrace as the Churches voice, do  
 not plainly manifest the Maxims of Reason to be as  
 much your Rule as ours?

And thirdly, Whether what was sufficient to pro-  
 duce Faith in me, and upon which its certainty de-  
 pends entirely, may not sufficiently assure me of one  
 particular Object of it?

Secondly, That skill in Arts and Sciences, Lan-  
 guage and History, are made our Rules of Faith, is  
 concluded from a double Argument.

Obj: 1. *That in Disputes against them, we prove  
 and defend our Faith by such skills as Language, Histo-  
 ry, and other Knowledge got by humane Learning, and  
 consequently hold it upon the Tenure of these Skills,  
 which therefore are our Rule of Faith.* p. 190.

*Ans.* This is a very formidable Argument, and  
 must force you to confess, That in proving and de-  
 fending of your Faith against us Protestants, you ne-  
 ver shew your skill in History, or any other part of  
 humane Learning, or to acknowledge (what you ab-  
 hor so much, p. 188.) that these also are your Rules  
 of Faith: Should a *Jew*, *Socinian*, or *Pagan*, use  
 this very Argument against your Church, I wonder  
 how you would avoid the blow?

Secondly, Your next Assault runs thus: *Do not  
 these*

*these Skills clear the letter of Scripture; that is, make known Gods sence to you? if so, since their immediate effect is to clear it, 'tis impossible to deny but they are at least part of the Revelation (as if it were impossible to deny the Comment to be a part of that Text it cleareth) for revealing is clearing; and Gods sence was not clearly revealed but by these means, that is, by humane Maxims, and so they are at least the more formal part of your Rule of Faith.*

*Ans.* I remember when I learn'd my Grammer, that I had a Construing Book, the immediate effect of which, was to clear to me the sence of my Rules contain'd in *Propria quæ maribus, Quæ Genus, &c.* but never was I so happy as to know that my *Construing book* was part of them, or to which special Rule it did belong: I knew indeed that *revealing was clearing*, and that the sence of these special Rules was not clearly revealed to me, but by means of my *Construing Book*; but was not so inured to Science, and versed in true Logick, as to be able to infer thence, That it was at least the most formal part of the Rules forementioned, but must thank my Friend for his Instruction in so deep a Mystery, and confess I owe that Light I have received in this Point, to his noon-day Sun of self-evidence.

For a close you ask, *Might I not have mistaken the true sence of Scripture without these humane Maxims? if so, then they, not Scriptures-letter, are my Rule of Faith.* p. 191.

*Ans.* And must that necessarily be my Rule of Faith, without which I might possibly have mistaken any portion of it? then good Eyes, and Ears, and diligence in using of them; good Dispositions, Judgment, Instruction, &c. must be my Rule of Faith; for

for without these, 'tis very probable I may be frequently mistaken in the sense thereof.

*Prop. 2.* That notwithstanding any thing M. S. hath pleaded to the contrary, Scripture may be a Rule of Faith, for to object, 'That Christian Religion had descended many steps ere the Scriptures parts were much scattered, much less the whole collected, is in effect to argue thus, Scripture was not a Rule to those that wanted, and therefore cannot be such unto those that have it : 'twas not the only Rule to those who were assisted by the infallible guidance of the Authors and Propounders of it, graced with the extraordinary assistance of the same Spirit, who drank even from the Fountain and Spring-head of Tradition, and therefore it cannot be so to us who are removed from it 16 Centuries, and destitute of all those Priviledges and Advantages which they enjoyed : And yet remarkable it is, That amidst all these Enjoyments the new-born Christian is sent unto his Scripture Rule ; his word of Prophecie, bid to give heed unto it as a thing more certain then a voice from Heaven, writ designedly for his instruction, able to make him wise unto salvation, perfect both in Faith and Manners, and make him thoroughly furnished unto all good Works : and after all, the Apostles are inspired to indite and to deliver the New Testament unto them to be the pillar and the ground of Faith ; and can it be imagined that Scriptures so comparatively obscure, so purposely designed for, and accommodated to the Jewish Pedagogy, should be thus commended and enjoined by the Spirit of God as a Rule unto the Christian, when graced with all the helps fore-mentioned ; and yet that Scripture which was indited by the same unerring

ring Spirit, In a more familiar way with great plainness of speech, and not obscured by a veil, as was that of Moses, which is exceedingly more full of moral Precepts, and Rules of Faith and Manners, of gracious Promises to comfort, and Exhortations to perswade to Patience and every other Vertue; which lastly, was Indited not in a Tongue peculiar to the Land of Jury, but such as was most generally spoken throw-out all the World, should never be intended as a Rule unto them, when destitute of those assistances?

2 Cor. 3.  
12, 13.

Obj: 2. 'Tis objected secondly, That that can never be a Rule which many follow, and yet their thoughts straggle into many several Judgements in Points of so great moment as the Trinity. *ibid.*

Ans. If you imagine that these straglers do indeed keep close unto the minde of God revea'd in Scripture, you blaspheme the Holy Ghost, and make the Word of God the very source of Heresie: if you affirm that cannot be a Rule which such pretend to follow, you in effect assert the Law of Nature, and right Reason could not be the Gentiles rule, and that he had no Pharaoh's to guide him to the knowledge of the Being and Attributes of God, because they generally took up with such uncouth notions, and gross absurdities in matters which are evident from the light of Reason: That neither Scripture nor Tradition could be a Rule unto the Jew, who branched into such Sects, as either did evacuate the Law of God by their Traditions, or deny'd the Resurrection: That Tradition is no Rule of Faith; or otherwise, That no pretender to it was ever guilty of an Heresie, And lastly, That the denyal

nyal of Tradition must be the onely Heresie ; all which are monstrous Absurdities , and yet the natural Results of your Assertion.

To conclude this Section, I must crave leave to minde my Friend of an early brood of *Carpocratian* Hereticks, who being confounded by the Scriptures to be revenged of them gave it

*Cum ex Scripturis arguuntur in accusationem convertuntur ipsarum Scripturarum, quasi non velle habent, neque sint ex auctoritate. & quia varie sunt dicta & quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas, ab his, qui nesciunt traditionem, non enim per literas traditam illam, sed per vivam vocem Iren. lib. 3. cap. 2.*

out, (1.) *That they were not as they should be (viz. the Original copies being not preserved entire Disc. 2. S. 5. & 7.) had not authority sufficient (there being no means to convince the Sceptick, the acute Adversary, yea the rational doubter of their truth, no certainty of Scripture in it self and no ascertainment of it unto us Disc. 4. S. 1. & c.) And (2.) That they were spoken variously (or so as to admit of diverse senses, Disc. 2. S. 6. 8.)*

And lastly, *That in them the truth could not be found by such as were ignorant of Tradition, it being not delivered by writing but by oral Tradition.* Good Sir, I do not in the least suspect that you have *Carpocratians* Manuscript, or that this passage of the Father did supply you with the heads of your Discourse, however it will let you see that he adheres firm to your Rule, p. 189. If then your inference stand good, the *Carpocratian* must be owned for your Brother Catholick, if bad, then blush hereafter to conclude our union with *Socinus*, because we both acknowledge the same Rule of Faith.

*Prop. 3.* That the Churches voice or practical Tradition is not necessary to acquaint us with the sence of Scripture as my Friend would have it, for if so (1.) Scripture must be in vain delivered to us: for where I have the suffrage of infallible Tradition I cannot want it, where I want that I cannot have it. (2.) In vain are all the Comments of the Church of Rome, for where Tradition is silent they want a certain Rule to go by, and therefore must be silent to, or speak at all adventures, and where she speaks her evidence is such as rendreth all their pains superfluous. (3.) All Arguments from Scripture must be vain whether intended to convince the Heretick, or your brother Catholick, if you contend against your Brother Heretick from Scripture, he presently demands whence have you your assurance of that sence of Scripture which you plead for, if you reply from the *tradition* of your Church, he laughs to hear you beg the Question, if from any other *Medium*, he presently returns upon you is it certain yea, or no? If not, then may it haply deceive him, if so, then do you act the Protestant, and own some other certain Guide unto the sence of Scripture then that of practical Tradition; 'tis vain also to dispute from Scripture with your Brother Catholick, for if you have no practical Tradition to assure you of the sence of Scripture you have no *Medium* to convince him by, if you have practical Tradition 'tis *self-evident*, and consequently cannot be matter of dispute or question'd by your Brother Traditors whilest such, whence it must necessarily follow that all the *School Disputes*, & all endeavours of your brother Catholick, to decide a controversy from Scripture must be in vain, all their arguments from Scripture

ture precarious, and all their pretensions to Tradition in these matters wilful cheats : if this be not sufficient, let me farther ask whether all moral duties comprised in Scripture may be interpreted by Tradition : if not, whether they be not useless to us ; if so whether the Jesuits and *Italian* Papists hold no Doctrines inconsistent with them, or whether that can be esteemed the Tradition of the Church which is supposed by so great and powerful Members of it ? Whether these were the only means and measures of interpretation to the Jewish Church, if not, how came they to be needful to the Christian, whose Rule is much the clearer, and whose assistance from that Spirit which leadeth unto truth far greater ? If so, then let us brand our Saviour for a Malefactor, and pronounce with them that by their Law he ought to dye, let us reject his Kingdom as being wholly Spiritual, and therefore opposite to what Tradition taught them to expect, let us reject his Law, as cancelling and dissolving that of *Moses* which they pronounced eternal : yea lastly, let us impeach the Arguments of Christ, and his Apostles as not only wanting this Authentick medium to arrive at the sense of Scripture, but being manifestly repugnant thereunto, or at least admire at the stupidity of the Scribes and Pharisees, who (albeit they sat in *Moses* Chair) should neither plead this in their own behalf, nor accuse our Saviour, or his Apostles for their pragmatistical opposition to it, but this argument is so copious, and the dream so entirely Beamenistical, that I shall not upbraid the Readers understanding by its farther refutation,



*Prop.* 4. Tradition is not the only Rule of Faith, for if so, the Church must lye exposed to the greatest perils, and want a rule of Faith in matters of the highest moment. For if Tradition be the sole Rule of Faith,

First, certain it is, that where we want Tradition, we must want the Rule of Faith, and consequently must waver, and be undetermined in all these instances and cases in which Tradition proves silent.

2. 'Tis manifest that what is eagerly maintained, and practised by many thousand Romish Profelites, asserted by whole Sects and Orders of their Gravest men, what passeth daily uncontrouled both from Prefs and Pulpit, as having nothing contrary to the Churches Doctrine, and the Rule of Faith, nay is acknowledged to be such by those who violently oppose it, what lastly doth not render the Abettors of it, how numerous soever, guilty of an Heresie, nor subject them to the censure of the Church, cannot interfere with the Tradition of the Church, or be condemned by it, or if so Tradition cannot be self-evident, as my Friend would have it.

Thirdly evident it is that many positions of this nature are stily canvased in the Schools, many such practises used in the Church of Rome, which if espoused and practised, must expose the Soul to the greatest peril in matters of the highest moment: For instance,

1. Therefore they lye open to the peril of a defective, or excessive Rule of Faith, for what assurance can they have whether the definition of the Pope alone, or in conjunction with his Cardinals be the infalible guide of Faith, or whether this be

the peculiar business of a Council, and whether this infallibility respect substantials only, or circumstances, Faith or Fact, the conclusion only, or the premises; whether it rest upon the due proceedings of the Council, the Confirmation of the Pope, the consequent approbation of the Church, or be wholly independant on them, whether the Tradition of the present Church be indeed a Rule, or only such Traditions, which can extrinsically be proved Apostolicall, whether this Tradition be a total, or a partial Rule, and what are the infallible Criterions of it; these things are hotly contested in the Church of Rome, and therefore cannot be defined by her Tradition, what remains then but that each soul lye open to the peril of a false defective, or excessive, yea contradictory Rule of Faith.

2. They lie exposed to the peril either of Superstition, and Idolatry on the one hand, or Sacrilege on the other: for (to omit their infinite divisions about the Worship due to Saints, Angels, and the Blessed Virgin, the Veneration due to Reliques, the Sacrament, and its appendages, and touch only upon that of Images) they are altogether uncertain whether they ought to pay their homage to the image or before it only, (which is asserted by some few, though censured by their expurgatory Indexes) whether this Homage must be *dulia* or *latria*, and if so, whether absolute, and simple, or only Analogically so called, whether all or any part of this pretended worship be due unto the image absolutely considered, or only, relatively, as it refers to that of which tis an Image, in these matters to be deficient is presently to be Sacrilegious, by robbing the Image of that honour which is due unto it, to exceed

is to be guilty of Superstition, or Idolary, by giving it that Homage which belongs not to it, and how to steer my course so as not dash on either of these rocks Tradition cannot possibly assist me.

3. They must be infinitely uncertain in matters of obedience to God. For seeing 'tis as evident as the Sun, and lately manifested by *Montanus* (a Catholick) that the Doctrines of the Jesuited Papist touching Repentance, Good intentions, the Love of God, &c. do cut the sinews of all virtue, and null the precepts of true pietie, and equally certain, that they are maintained by the gravest Doctors of their Church, nay styled the common Doctrine of the Church, it follows that they interfere not with their Rule of Faith and therefore cannot be reproved by it.

4. They must be destitute of all the preservatives against the vilest of Rebellions, it being frequently asserted in the Schools and held by most considerable members of that Church, that Catholicks may be absolved from their Oaths, Vows, and Covenants made to Princes, and authorized by his Holiness to depose them. From what hath been discoursed, it must follow that if Tradition be the only Rule of Faith: then

1. Should Catholicks act up to the most desperate consequences of such opinions which pass thus currant in the Church of *Rome*, they could not possibly be condemned by or rationally be said to deviate from her Rule of Faith.

2. That the vilest Christian and worst of Subjects may do all that Catholick Religion, and his duty doth oblige him too, because all that practical Tradition, or the Churches living voice requires; that

what is, strangely opposite and scandalous to Christianity, and destructive unto Civil Government is yet assent with their Rule of Faith, and that 'tis lawful to opine at pleasure in these matters.

3. That these diseases must be all incurable, and admit of no redress for to make them pass into Tradition, and improve themselves into articles of Faith, is to impower the Church to coyn new articles, and pretend Tradition where it is not to be had.

4. That what ever hath been said of some doth equally proceed against all other scandalous opinions of their Church, of which nature 'twere easie to collect sufficient to tire mine own, and the Readers patience.

## C A P. IV.

*Of the Authority of the Church in  
matters of Faith.*

*Prop. 1.* **T**HAT the Church is a Society, the very name, and notorety of the thing, the definition, members, discipline, and constitutions of it do sufficiently declare.

*Prop. 2.* That this Society must be Invested with a Ruling power, is certain, both from the nature of all Civil union, which implyes a compact, and that a Governour, whose business it is, to see that they who enter into compact, do not violate the lawes thereof, as also from the ends of this Society, viz. The union and due ordering of her Members and execution of her discipline to the correction, or exclusion of such persons who cooperate towards her ruine.

*Prop. 3.* The Church is a Society of Believers, or of men united in the belief of certain Articles, as the Foundations of it, hence styled fundamental Articles, this is the joynt consent of Christians, however in the notion and number of their fundamentals they differ much.

*Coral.* Hence it must follow that Church Governours must be impowred to require the belief of or positive assent unto these Fundamental Articles, as being otherwise unable to secure the Being and provide against the ruine of that Church, of which they are a part. When therefore M. S. so confidently gives out (without all manner of exceptions) that our Church

Church is *Shamefac'd* of obliging others to believe her, p. 194. and that *she* professeth her self very heartily content with external obedience, let the interior assent go where it will: p. 199. I cannot but admire, that so ingenious a person should vent such things, which every day confutes, and tell our Church, she expects not that her members should believe that Creed, which she esteems her fundamentals, inserts into her Catechisms, requires us to Agnize in Baptisme, rehearse in all her Sacred offices, and that with a peculiar circumstance designed to signifie our assent unto and readiness to defend it.

*Obj.* But do you not in big words ask when did she challenge any power over our minds & consciences? p. 198. And doth not M.S. well infer, that therefore you deny that she requires an interior assent. *Ans.* No, these things are vastly different, require interior assent he may, who being authorized to guide me in matters of faith can evidence what he thus requires to be the will of God revealed, yea such interior assent is due from Children to their Parents, from Servants to their Masters, much more from People to their Pastors when evidencing their duty to them, but challenge power over the mind and conscience, he only can who is Lord of the conscience, & whose laws by an immediate virtue bind the conscience, for what binds only mediately, hath not this obligatory power from any virtue of the Legislator over the mind and conscience, but only from that power which commands the conscience to obey such Legislators.

And if interior assent may be required, I wonder why it should be more irrational, to go about to lay an obligation on the Cathol. p. 199. by these two Oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, then upon the Protestant

(as my Friend imagines.) That it should be rational to bind the loyal Subject by those Oaths, but irrational to bind those whose Treacheries and Conspiracies first made them necessary, if *difference of Religion* be a just exemption, then may the *Quaker*, *Anabaptist*, and other turbulent persons which renounce our Church, plead for a share in this exemption, and King and Parliament must be unjust and tyrannous in laying such a burthen on them.

*Prop. 4.* A particular Church cannot require this assent upon pretence of an infallible assistance,) (for seeing all have the like title to it, it would be impossible for any of them to have erred) and therefore she must do it because the thing determined is so evident in the Rule of Faith, that all deny-all of it must be wilful, for seeing 'tis already proved that she hath power to require this assent, and that this power cannot derive from an infallible assistance, what remains, but that it bottom upon the evidence of the thing? But then the query is, *Who must be judge what is so evident in Scripture, as to render the dissentors guilty of flat wilfulness.* p. 195.

*Ans.* Faith being an assent, and consequently the result of judgment, each private person must be allowed his judgment of discretion, much more those who are authorized to require our assent to fundamentals, and to preserve the peace and union of the Church inviolable, and sure 'twould be a great impeachment to our Saviour, to intrust persons with the preservation of this *Depositum*, and to require them to give heed to it, as they will answer it at the great day, and yet afford no means to be assured of it. But if each private person must have a judgment of discretion by which he must admit of, or reject the

*laws of his superiors, ( & if it should be otherwise men must renounce their reason, & reject the guidance of their conscience, and so of Gods Vicegerent, & act in the concerns of their eternal souls at all adventures) who shall pass judgement on the final and irrefragable judge : thus Fiat lux, Ep. 2. p. 198.*

*Ans.* The Conscience being subject unto none but God (who only knows the secrets of it) he only can pass judgement of its actions and pretences, and he assuredly will convince the Shismatick and Heretick twas not their Reason but their lusts that did betray them to such errors, but the results of such a Judgement which interfere with the received doctrine or customes of the Church, must so far be condemned and censured by the Superiors of the Church, as they do interrupt the Peace and Unity thereof. The Jews were bound to hearken to the Scribes and Pharisees the *Sanhedrim* and High-Priest, (and they had power to chastise their disobedience in lawful matters) and yet I hope with that discretion which was requisite to preserve them from condemning our *Messias* for a cheat, or for embracing those Traditions which did evacuate the Law of God, for otherwise our Saviour was very much to blame, when he so often taught the contrary, and put in so many caveats against the leaven of the Scribes and Pharisees. Thus Rulers are appointed for a terror unto evil-doers, and an encouragement unto the Good, and consequently must have sufficient means to be instructed in that Good or evil which they are to reward or punish, and power so to do, and yet inferiours are forbid to yeild obedience to their unlawful precepts, and in such cases are to prefer obedience to the Laws of God, which



which must suppose a judgement of discretion in them to discern what precepts are unlawful, and when they interfere with the unerring rule of Scripture so well consistent is the judgement of discretion, we allow to private persons, both with the power of Superiors and Peace and Unity of the Church.

*Ob. But I denyed them to be judges of Faith: Now to be clearly revealed, or evident in Scripture, and to be of Faith is all one so that they must not be judges of what is evident in Scripture, least by necessary consequence, they become judges of Faith too.* p.195.

*Ans.* This argument supposeth that to be judge of Faith, and to be judge of what is Faith, are terms equivalent, which is a great mistake, to judge what is Faith, and what is evidently revealed in Scripture, is the business of each Catechist and Proacher who declares the Articles of Faith, of each believer who assents unto them because his judgement tells him they are such, and therefore signally the work of them, with whom this Faith is visibly intrusted, but to be judge of Faith, or to be that person or community whose judgement in such matters must be infallibly received without farther scrutiny, is a prerogative as clearly incompetent to any person or community as it is vehemently pretended to, 'twas Sir upon this slender Cobweb your doughty inference did hang.

*Ob. 2. You refuse to admit them as Guides of their Faith, which signifies they may have power to require our assents in matters in which they have no power to guide us, i. e. they may have power to require us to go wrong for any thing we or they know.* p.195.

*Ans.* Let me again inform you that to guide others in their

*their faith, or to it, and to be guide of Faith, are things extremely differing: whoever doth instruct his Brother in any matter of Faith, or reclaim him from his Error, becomes a charitable Guide unto Faith; whoever by the Church is authorized so to do, becomes an Authoritative Guide unto Faith: but to be guide of Faith (especially in that sense in which this phrase is taken in our present Controversie) is to be such a one whose judgement must determine for us what is Faith, what not; and thus our Reason onely is our Guide in matters dubious.*

*Ob: 3. But what can be replied to a Socinian, answering, when his assent to the Trinity is required, That he humbly submitted to Scrip. that he used all means he could, but discovered it not so evident there as you conceive it.*

*Ans.* The very same you would return unto your Brother Carpocratian, pretending as humble a submission to your Rule of Faith, and yet concluding thence for Heresie; or to the Protestant, asserting Tradition where it may be had, to be as Authentick as the written Word; and yet protesting, That after all means used, he could never finde therein one footstep of the Romish Faith; or lastly, to the *Arrian* of old, or now *Photinian*, who both laid claim to the Tradition of the three first Centuries: In a word, the onely answer you can make to such Enquiries, must be this, *That your appeal unto Tradition is both true and just, so was not that of the Photinian or Carpocratian Heretick: And surely then the like return of Protestants to the Socinian, Quaker, Independant, when pretending the same reason for their separation from the Church of England, which we do from that of Rome, if founded upon real Truth, must vindicate our Church from all your clamors.*

*Obj:*

**Object:** But upon the same right and title that we separated from Rome, did Independants, Quakers, &c. depart from us; for since they do it upon their own discretion, and so upon our Principle, to deny it to be done by them so justly, or so truly, is to do wickedly; and talk fondly, *Fiat Lux* Ep: 2. p. 198, 199. or which is tantamount, to do and talk after the manner of *fiat lux*.

**Answer:** As if not onely the Carpocrations, but the Jew and Heathen should be thought to act as justly and as truly as the best of Catholicks, because as vehement Assertors of the Traditions of their Fathers; and all the Actions and Sentiments of Mankind should carry equal Truth and Justice in them, as being equally the products of what they looked on as reason and discretion: Thus *Saul* the Persecutor must act as justly, as *Paul* the Doctor of the Gentiles; because according to his Conscience; and the Catholick, when Preaching to convert, and practising to destroy his Prince; must do both with equal Justice; provided that his good Intentions to propagate the Roman Faith, be alike in both.

**Prop: 5.** In matters which belong not to the Foundations of our Faith, to be content with such Submission as is consistent with a liberty of opinion, and binds us onely to reserve our Judgements to our selves, in what they differ from the professed Doctrine of the Church we live in, seems most serviceable to the ends of Peace and Unity; to the ends of Peace, because it lesseneth the Objects, and so withdraws the fuel of Contention; of Unity, because it much enlargeth the conditions of it, and rendreth them such, as may more easily be submitted to,

*Coroll:*

*Coroll:* Hence 'tis apparently most safe and prudent, to be content with this submission, as being most conducive to the Peace and Union that is unto the Sovereign ends of Christian Government; and is it not unreasonable that Men should be excluded by the Church from her Communion, for what is very well consistent with our communion with the God of Heaven, our union to the Churches Head; yea, for what is neither necessary to the Churches being, peace or unity; nor can be prejudicial to them, whilst reserved to our selves? Besides, the condition of Church communion, must bottom upon what is clear and evident, for else the Union of the Church, and our duty to preserve it, must both rest on what's uncertain and obscure (a thing repugnant both to the Wisdom and Goodness of the Churches Head) now that in matters remote from the foundation, we have mostly no such evidence, is but too visible in the Disputes and Contests which are on both sides managed by many Learned and impartial Men. To conclude: Let any Man consider the variety of Gifts, Affections, Prejudices, and infinite other Circumstances, that are incident to humane Nature; and then tell me, whether it be not irrational to hope, That all the Members of a Church, in matters of this nature, should conspire, and knit into one Faith and Judgement? and must it not be most unreasonable, to make this Union the condition of communion with the Church? If therefore in these matters our Church contents her self with this submission, and doth not binde us to declare our inward assent, she acts both prudently and safely, and as becometh an indulgent Mother.

Prop.

**Prop: 6.** The Church hath power to silence such Disputes as tend immediately to break her peace and unity: This is so proper a result of civil Union, as that without it, all Government must shatter into Sects and Factions, and therefore most of all may be expected in that Platform which our Savior laid, and must be granted by all those, who dare not think our Lord defective in his Designs and Contrivances for his Churches Peace and Unity: In a word, Each Church is bound to look to her own Peace, and therefore is impowred to prevent what violates it.

**Prop: 7.** All Men are bound, whatever their private Sentiments may be, to submit externally to the sentence of the Church, in matters which entrench not on the Fundamentals of their Faith, because the teaching of such Doctrines must be of lesser moment than the preservation of the Churches peace; for should such Doctrines wholly perish from the Church, her Peace, Unity and Being, might be sufficiently preserved notwithstanding, whereas this cannot reasonably be hoped for under an eager violent abetment of them in despite of all Authority; and certainly, if Church-Governors stand bound unto the preservation of the Churches Peace and Unity, they must be bound in many instances to still our mutual Contests, and require the submission now intended, and then the governed must be obliged to perform it.

**Prop: 8.** No Church can justly require assent unto her Proposals, on account of her infallibility; for were this Privilege vouchsafed to the Church, is it not won off that a Doctrine so necessary to the attainment of salvation should either be concealed from the  
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four Evangelists, or by them (if not concealed yet) so obscurely delivered to the Church? Can we suppose these wise and holy Men (and especially that good Spirit which assisted them) either so envious as wilfully to deprive the Church of such an happiness, for whose prosperity they suffered so much, and which they almost Christened with their Blood; or so forgetful of the Work they took in hand, viz. the writing of the Gospel of Christ, as to neglect the clear rehearsal of that Doctrine, without which (if the Papist may be credited) all others are not creditable? 'tis evident, they speak perspicuously of many things of small importance in comparison of this, and is it possible they should conspire to the deepest silence or obscurity in this most necessary thing, this fundamental of all that is so? Is it imaginable that S. Luke, intending purposely to satisfy *Theophilus* in these things wherein he had been Catechised, and which most sorely were believed amongst Christians, should neglect this great Foundation of them all, without which, Faith most necessarily suffer Shipwrack, and all his labor be in vain? That the beloved Apostle having writ so many signs, that we might believe that *Jesus is the Son of God*, should neglect that, without which, nothing that he said could be available to produce Faith in us, or secure us from mistaking in it? Is it possible that our Saviour, who foresaw whatever might disturb his Church, yea, had experience of Mens unwillingness to submit to others, and readiness to advance themselves in his own Disciples, should yet deliver this Doctrine (if at all delivered) so obscurely, that now it is become the greatest Controversie, whether he intended any thing of this

nature? and the testimonies of Scripture so strangely baffled, that Papists dare not go about to vindicate them from our Exceptions? That he should constitute that to be the onely means of deciding Controversies, which he foresaw would be so determinable without the certain knowledge of some hundreds of Particulars, in which whole thousands of Men, excellent for Parts and Piety, do clash perpetually? That under the Old Testament, the Judge of matters between blood and blood, plea and plea, and such Political Transactions, should be so punctually set down: And in the New Testament, this Judge of Faith, and the eternal Concernments of our Souls, should be passed over in silence, or delivered in such terms as are equally adapted to all pretenders to be the Church, and altogether unserviceable when 'tis doubtful? Is it not strange, that so great a part of the New Testament should be employed about Antichrist, and all the methods he should use to draw Men from the Faith, and yet just nothing be delivered of that Guide to which all faithful Christians were to have recourse against him? That the Spirit should speak expressly, of some *great departure from the Faith in these latter times*, and not admonish us of the sure and onely means to secure our falling: That St. Paul, amongst all his vehement Exhortations unto Unity, all his endeavors against Schism in the *Corinthians*, and elsewhere, should not once deliver this unto them as a means infallibly to preserve them from it, but spend his time in other matters, which, without this, are not at all available to our souls welfare? That having assembled the Elders of *Ephesus*, and told them, That after his departure, grievous Wolves should enter

enter in among them, he should not once direct them to the onely means for preservation? That the Apostles in the compiling of the Creed, should give no intimation of that, without which, nothing can hang firm? That *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Cyprian*, and others, purposely delivering the Fundamentals of their Faith, should be deficient in the like kinde? That never any of the Primitive Fathers in their Comments on this Symbol, should inform us of *this one thing necessary*? That they should talk so much of the Catholick Church, and not one title of its infallibility? That in their descants on these Passages, which are so often pleaded by the *Romanist*, they should never intimate unto us that in the Judgement of the Catholick Church, or at least their own, they taught infallibility? That the *Nicene* Fathers, albeit they had so great occasion from the multiplying of Heresies, to have insisted upon this so Fundamental Doctrine (that each Mans Soul must bottom on it, or be built upon the Sand) should not onely wave the stating, clearing, confirming, or the trying of it, but compose a Creed, and never mention it? That the *Catechumeni* should never be taught this foundation of their Faith? That it should never be required at Baptism? That none of the Treatises *ad Catechumenos*, *Institutiones Mystagogica*, *Enchiridia Doctrina Christiana*? None of the Treatises of the Church her self, should once make mention of this great and principal Fundamental, is, as if a Man should write of the chief Cities in *England*, and leave out *York* and *London*, or of the degrees of Hierarchy in the Church of *Rome*, and leave out Pope and Cardinal? lastly, That whereas since the Usurpation of this Prerogative by the Church



of *Rome* there have been hundreds of Disputes touching the subject of its infallibility, whether Christ were here or there, without determining of which to affirm in gross the Churches infallibility is to leave us perfectly in a maze, & say just nothing, that not any of those disputes should ever be started, nor any thing resolved upon? These are things morally impossible and consequently this pretended infallibility must be so: this being so 'tis superfluous to refute the pretence of a General Council to it, for besides what already hath been said, can it be that whats so necessary to the welfare to the Church should by an all-wise God be left at infinite uncertainties? A general Council is infallible say they provided that it be legitimately called, & that the members of it be legitimate, that they be legally elected, and in due number from every part and portion of the Church; that being thus convened they vote freely and without constraint, and packing: after due Means of Study, Prayer and fasting used; provided lastly that the decree conciliarly, have these decrees confirmed by the *Pope*, and accepted by the Church, diffused, if one of these conditions be wanting to the greatest Councils they take liberty to reject them, & yet who knows not what animosities, and feuds there are in the now present Church of *Rome* (and much more in the Church of God) touching the greater part of Councils styled Oeconomical? whether all these conditions have been punctually observed by them in the whole, and each particular Decree? how more then probable it is that like uncertainties should arise touching the definitions of future Councils? & how impossible it is for any, (but especially for persons illiterate & far removed from

(the place of their Convention) to attain to any tolerable satisfaction in all these particulars? This objection is by the wiser sort of Papists handsomely passed over as knowing it to be unanswerable; but *Fiat Lux* hath ignorance enough to warrant his attempts upon it, which are these:

1. That we may as well except against the obliging power of the decrees and Acts of King and Parliament, and say, is that power in the King alone, or in the Parliament, what if they run counter, what if they should not be rightly Chosen. p. 190.

*Ans.* But dares he say that one of these particulars are undetermined by our Law? Dares he avouch that the obliging power of our Acts of Parliaments depends on such a multitude of things, of which no tolerable assurance can be had? If so, he evidently stands guilty not only of Rebellion, but justifies the late Phanatick, assuring him that he may safely question and oppose the power both of King and Parliament, as depending on some hundreds of uncertainties, as hotly contested, and as unresolved by the Lawyers of the Land, as the forementioned Decrees of Councils are in the Church of Rome: Is not how gross most his impertinence and folly be, in bringing such comparisons which both his conscience and his reason tell him are vastly different from what his adversary produceth? And yet secondly, who knows not that a less degree of certainty may suffice in civil, then in sacred matters.

But secondly, he takes Sanctuary in *Titulus coloratus*, and moral evidence, and tells us, that if this suffice not we can be sure of no Authority either Spiritual or Civil in this world. *ibid.*

*Ans.* And is this that *Fiat Lux*, who writ a pamphlet

phlet of infallibility? Made it so necessary for the Churches welfare, that without it *nothing can hang firm nor Christ be just*, p. 5, 6. had he not provided such assurance for our faith to build upon, is he now content to sit down with *Titulus Coloratus*, & moral evidence? And to confess that Catholick Faith, and the Authority of the Church depends upon so many and such various conditions for which they do pretend but moral evidence? Is not this moral evidence the very thing at which the Romanist doth so much quarrel in the resolution of our Faith? And must it now become the refuge of those very men who do so vehemently cry out against it in the Protestant; See here the triumph and the victory of Truth, which forceth her professed adversaries to agnize and own her though to the ruine of their cause and credit, and yet manifest it is that few of the particulars objected will admit of moral evidence, or any tollerable degree of probability.

*Corol.* 1. Hence see the excellency of our Churches method for peace and unity beyond what *Rome* can boast of, seeing then only she requires our assent, when the revelation is so clear and palpable that he who runs may read it, and when the thing is such, as hath the testimony and approbation of the whole Christian World, handed down from the Apostles, to this present age, and acknowledged to be such by Catholicks themselves. And in other things rests contented with that submission which is consistent with mens liberty of conscience, and each mans duty to afford her, whereas *Rome* doth not only bind the conscience to whats unnecessary, unheard of in the Churches Creeds till now of late, and so obscure as to be matter of contest through the Christian world,

but doth all this upon pretence of that infallibility which were it only questionable, must subject us to the peril of embracing the most destructive errors for divinest truths, without all hopes of a redress, dispose us unto Atheisme, and irreligion, by making all our Faith and piety depend on what is disputable, and lay us open to continual fears and jealousies, doubts and uncertainties, Schisms and dissensions, about the rule and foundation of our Faith, but being evidently false, must be most certainly productive of these fatal consequences, and yet we must be told with so much confidence: p.200. *That plainest common sense will teach us and every man who considers it, that unless we settle some indisputable method of arriving at Christs sence, or faith, that is, some self-evident (and so all obliging) Rule of Faith, the Protestant Church can never hope for power to reduce their dissenters, nor to hold together or govern efficaciously their own subjects, that is, they can never hope for unity within themselves or union with them that have it. Which in effect, is thus much, That both his sacred Majestie, and all his Peers and Prelates, Laity, and Clergy, are profest opposers of what plainest common sence, and each mans Reason must suggest unto him as the sole expedient of the Churches welfare; for which great charity, and worthy thoughts of our whole Nation, 'tis pittie but it should be ordered by the King and Parliament, that due thanks be given to Mr S. especially seeing he hath been at the vast expence of an ipse dixit, to confirm the charge, hower contenti sumus hoc Catone, nor have we need to add homine imprudenti atque imperito nihil quicquam injustius.*

Cor.2. This shews what spirit of Divination had possessed my friend when thus he talks, Hence we may see

confessedly in the Protestant principles the Reason of their present and past distractions, and divine of the future, for mens fancies being naturally various, & no power in her to keep them in union, they must needs ramble into multitudes of Dissenting Sects, which to strive to unite in one, were to force both nature and conscience too. Nature in striving to unite their understandings in Faith, without offering them evidence of Authority, conscience in binding them to act as Protestants do, whereas they are ready to stake their Salvation upon it, that their best reasons working upon the very Rule of Faith, Protestants recommend, obliges them to the contrary. For first in fundamentals, in which onely we think it necessary to unite the understandings of our people, we have confessedly all the evidence that Scripture and Tradition, (the Rule of Protestants and Papists) can afford. And secondly, in other matters we have power to silence such disputes, and prevent the spreading of such opinions as may cause divisions, and inflict the Churches censures upon those that do so, and consequent, ly have sufficient provisions for that peace and unity, which is necessary to the Churches welfare. And thirdly, either we do not bind the conscience, and therefore cannot force it, or else we do it upon that pregnant evidence now mentioned, and therefore cannot be said to oblige the will against the understanding. And lastly, we are as ready to protest that our best reason working upon the very rule of Faith, which Romanists recommend unto us, obligeth us to renounce their faith, and that to force us to act with them, would be to force our consciences unto sin.

For a close to cry quit with you, this shews the reason of that General Atheism, Scepticism and Irreligion which is spread over the face of the whole

Roman

Roman Church, which prevails so much in *France* and *Italy*, and makes *Rome* Christian, little differ from her self whilst Heathen, for having built her Faith upon that infallibility which stands liable to multitude of doubts, and is confuted by variety of Arguments and Experiences, what remains but that Religion perish in its ruines. Once more this shews the reason of the sudden growth of Atheism in this our Nation, for Catholicks having by experience found that all their endeavours must be fruitless whilst we have Scripture for our Rule, that whilst Christianity stands upon its old foundations, their politick profession of it cannot find *sure footing* in our Nation, have at last made it their professed business to draw the night upon her, to wipe out Scripture at one dash, and pronounce all those arguments which the first Champions of Christianity made use of, unsatisfactory and null, that being thus benighted even by a *fiat lux*, we might take up with an implicate faith, and being first made Atheists, be in a nearer disposition to accept the Papist: And lastly, that finding no *sure footing* in the Scriptures, we might run unto Tradition for it.

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*An Appendix containing an Answer to those few passages in Fiat Lux which beare some shew of Reason, and might possibly deceive the unwary Reader.*

1. **T**herefore 'tis asserted, That the power of appealing to the Bishop of Rome mentioned in the Council of Sardica was ad *Julium Romanum*, not ad *Papam Romanum*, and so a personal privilege, which might cease on the death of Julius. p. 59. that is, quoth *Fiat Lux*, not to the pope who then was Julius, but to Julius who then was Pope p. 55. Whereas he should have said not to him as Pope, but as Julius, i.e. as one deposed and reviled by the Eastern Bishops against whom this Council did oppose themselves, endeavouring to advance him, as much as they endeavoured to depress, and vilify him, but alas *materialiter* and *formaliter* are terms which the poor man is wholly unacquainted with, and this answer was grounded upon History which neither his *Don Quixot* nor *Hudibras* would afford him, and therefore 'twas above his shallow capacity.

'Twas secondly asserted that the Doctrine stigmatized by Saint Paul as a Doctrine of Devils was ~~not~~ that of those in general that forbid marriage, not condemn it upon such and such particular accounts. And therefore though the Encratite & Montanist were deeper yet they also did participate in the guilt. p. 210. To convince this answer of folly & falsehood it is thus rejoined, That if so 'twould follow that the Church of England must be guilty of the Doctrine of

*Divels by prohibiting marriage in the times of Lent and Advent, p. 182. A.* as if it were all one to forbid the thing, and to restrain the doing of it at times unreasonable, and *S. Paul* had been as great a criminal for advising abstinence from due Benevolence at times of extraordinary prayer and fasting as they who alwaies thought it necessary to do so, and lastly to forbid flesh in general, and to forbid it upon daies of fasting and humiliation, were things equivalent; tis I confess the same to forbid it at times unfit, and unto persons to whom it is so, but never will it be evinced that that marriage which is honourable in all, be undecent in the Clergy.

3. But do you not acknowledge their fundamentals to be so perspicuous as what is written with a Sun beam, and therefore such as none but fools can possibly mistake in, and is it not then justly wondred by *Fiat Lux*, that any Protestant writers should affirm that general Councils who have Authority from *Christ* of deciding controversies, greater assistance in, and means of finding out the truth then others should lye under a possibility of erring in what is so perspicuous and cleare.

*Ans. 1.* This objection doth as much concern the Catholick as us, who albeit he pretends infallible, and so the greatest evidence for matters of his Faith, yet cannot, but acknowledge that they are contradicted not only by the Eastern, but a considerable part of the Western Church; Doth not my Friend, and all his brother Catholicks assert, That the authority of their Church, is such a motive to believe, that only irrational, vicious and willfully blind persons can recede from it by disbelief, *S.F. p. 197.* & yet have not its definitions been solemnly condemned by *Arrian Councils* as great as any they stile general? And by the



the Provincial Councils of the Reformed Churches, are not these condemnations, subscribed, propugned and adjusted by far greater multitudes of learned men then ever did convene in General Councils? and what is incident to them diffused, why may it not be incident to a far less number when convened? Nay secondly was not the law of Nature, were not the Notions of a Deity so manifest and obvious as to render the offender *avowed* or condemned of his own conscience? And yet were not the greater part of men such fools for many hundreds of years together, to act in contradiction to them? Was not the Doctrine of our Saviour confirmed by such Miracles, such Prophecies and other signal evidences as rendred it unquestionably true, and the rejectors of it inexcusable: and did not yet the *Sanhedrim* and Jew, reject it and Blaspheme it though convinced of its truth; nay is not the generality of the learned world (much more the giddy and unruly multitude) so inconsiderate as to run headlong to that ruine which daily lays before their eyes, and no wonder that it should be so since the Church story shews too plainly that interest, pride, and faction, prejudice, false principles, and a mistaken Rule of Faith, have but too often acted in the Rulers of the Church: yea even Reason and Experience informs us that such persons have most subtilty to elude the plainest arguments, and most concluding Reasons, to find out contrary pretences to oppose against them, and many other artifices to bind their Faith unto their interests.

F I N I S.